



Southeast Fishery Bulletin

National Marine Fisheries Service, Southeast Regional Office, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, Florida 33701

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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NR05-027

Proposed Rule for Amendment 6 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Shrimp Fishery of the South Atlantic Region Available for Public Review and Comment

NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has published a proposed rule in the *Federal Register* to implement actions found in Amendment 6. The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) submitted Amendment 6 for review, approval, and implementation by the Secretary of Commerce. NMFS announced the availability of Amendment 6 in an earlier Southeast Fishery Bulletin (NR05-012) on March 4, 2005. NMFS is now requesting comment on the proposed rule. The proposed rule, if implemented, would give effect to the following regulatory changes, briefly summarized below.

- Require the use of bycatch reduction devices in the rock shrimp fishery in the South Atlantic exclusive economic zone (EEZ).
- Establish standardized bycatch reporting requirements, including logbooks and observers, for the shrimp fishery of the South Atlantic EEZ.
- Require all vessels harvesting or possessing brown, white or pink (penaeid) shrimp in the South Atlantic EEZ to obtain an annually renewable federal shrimp vessel permit from NMFS.

Amendment 6 also contains several non-regulatory actions. Publication of a final rule would give effect to these actions as well.

- Transfer authority of the shrimp Bycatch Reduction Device (BRD) testing protocol to NMFS, and modify the bycatch reduction certification criterion to a general 30 percent finfish reduction.
- Establish or modify designations of maximum sustainable yield, optimum yield, overfishing and overfished for penaeid and rock shrimp.

For a complete description of the proposed regulatory changes, please obtain a copy of the proposed rule (see Addresses and Dates). The proposed regulatory changes are intended to enhance the ecological efficiency of the shrimp fishery of the South Atlantic EEZ by better identifying the bycatch in the fishery and conserving

those species found in the bycatch, while sustaining the viability of the shrimp fishery with a minimum of economic and social impacts.

ADDRESSES AND DATES: Written copies of the proposed rule may be obtained from NMFS' Southeast Regional Office, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, Florida 33701. Electronic copies of the proposed rule may be obtained from the *Federal Register* website at <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/index.html>. Written comments must be received no later than 5 p.m., eastern time, on July 11, 2005. Comments may be submitted via email, written correspondence, or fax. All comments received will be addressed in the final rule.

E-mail: 0648-AS16.Proposed@noaa.gov. Include the following in the subject: 0648-AS16-Proposed.

Federal e-Rulemaking Portal: Follow the instructions at <http://www.regulations.gov>.

Mail: Steve Branstetter, Southeast Regional Office, National Marine Fisheries Service, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, Florida 33701.

Fax: Comments may be faxed to 727-824-5308.

NMFS is dedicated to protecting and preserving the nation's living marine resources and their habitats through scientific research, management, and enforcement. NMFS provides effective stewardship of these resources for the benefit of the nation, supporting coastal communities that depend upon them, and helping to provide safe and healthy seafood to consumers and recreational opportunities for the American public.

NOAA is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources.

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